



Valeur éthique et valeur esthétique en littérature

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Abstract: Though the conflict between the ethical and aesthetic values of the literary work comes to a head in 19th century France, this opposition remains an essential paradigm for our understanding of 20th century literature. The disapprobation of conservative critics notwithstanding, the heritage of "art for art's sake" and the easing of censorship gave rise to polemical literary works, which neither the "*épuration*" process after World War II, nor political and social condemnation could exclude from entering our literary heritage. These works have survived scandal, and seem to call for a double reading, owing to their integration in a national literary canon, which cannot ignore either the issue of literary quality or that of literature's moral responsibility. Could the solution to this dilemma lie in an ethical redeeming of aesthetics? How can literature survive its own nationalization?

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